

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 25, 2017

Mr. Matthew Welbes  
Executive Director  
Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Welbes,

We urge the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to immediately sign the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and move the Maryland National Capital Purple Line project forward. The July 19, 2017 order of the United States Court of Appeals – District of Columbia Circuit reinstated the FTA's Record of Decision (ROD) for this shovel-ready project, clearing the last major hurdle for the signing of the agreement and the start of construction.


As you know, the Purple Line Project is a 16.2 mile, 21-station, east-west light rail line that will connect numerous communities in Maryland. The line will connect major economic and jobs centers in the region, three Metrorail lines, all three Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) rail lines and Amtrak's Northeast Corridor line. This project will play an integral role in revitalizing the inner-suburban communities we represent; bringing new economic opportunities to underserved parts of the region while generating 6,300 construction jobs and 27,000 permanent jobs, in addition to connecting the 6,000 small businesses and 130,000 jobs within a half mile of the line.

It is encouraging that the Administration is willing to fund the Purple Line in its FY18 budget request for the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program. Congress' bipartisan commitment to the CIG program and the Purple Line project is evidenced in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-31), which increased total grant funding by \$236 million to \$2.4 billion, and brought total appropriations for the Purple Line to \$325 million. The availability of funding and these appropriations is a sign that Congress expects the Administration to continue signing FFGAs for highly rated projects.

As a public-private partnership, the Purple Line could serve as a model for similar projects around the country. Public funds through FTA's New Starts Program, the Maryland Transportation Trust Fund and outlays from Montgomery and Prince George's Counties will pay for a little over half of the \$2.4 billion project, with Purple Line Transit Partners LLC - the state's private concessionaire - securing an additional \$1 billion in financing. The private team would be reimbursed for design and construction and would then be paid annually to operate and maintain the line for 30 years. The partnership takes advantage of the private sector's expertise and reduces risks for construction delays and cost overruns.

Congress and the Administration are committed to rebuilding our nation's infrastructure and investing in projects that will create jobs and increase economic growth in the communities that need it most. The Maryland National Capital Purple Line is such a project, and with your help, we can realize its promise and opportunity for our constituents. It is our sincere hope that the FTA will sign a FFGA with Maryland in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,




Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress



Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

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John Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

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John K. Delaney  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jamie Raskin", written over a horizontal line.

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress